

**The Report of the  
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**North Ogden Junior High School  
575 East 2900 North  
Ogden, Utah 84414**

**April 5-6, 2004**



Utah State Office of Education  
250 East 500 South  
P.O. Box 144200  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

**THE REPORT OF THE  
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**North Ogden Junior High School  
575 East 2900 North  
Ogden, Utah 84414**

**April 5-6, 2004**

**UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION**

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Interim State Superintendent of Public Instruction**

**DIVISION OF  
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## **FOREWORD**

A major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate inservice growth and school improvement. Consequently, requirements include not only meeting the standards of the Utah State Office of Education, but also completing a school evaluation every six years.

School evaluation is that effort by the local school staff to take a comprehensive look at the school's program, operation, and effect. The school determines how closely its purposes and philosophy coincide with its actual practices and the degree to which its stated objectives are being reached. It is a three-phased program: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, April 5-6, 2004, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to meet the requirements referred to above.

The entire staff of North Ogden Junior High School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the . The excellent leadership given by Principal Donald R. Tanner is commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for the generally fine program being provided for North Ogden Junior High School students, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more adequately meet the needs of the students of North Ogden Junior High School.

Patrick Ogden  
Interim State Superintendent  
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*10/30/03*

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## **NORTH OGDEN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

### **ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF**

#### **School Administration**

Donald R. Tanner ..... Principal  
Craig Jessop ..... Assistant Principal

#### **Counseling**

Kristy T. Haws ..... Counselor  
Teri L. Spiers ..... Counselor

#### **Support Staff**

JoAnne S. Kelly ..... Head Secretary  
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Diane Hall ..... Office Aide  
Diane Cassity ..... Office Aide  
Tiffany A. Linford ..... Office Aide  
Michael Porter ..... User Support Specialist  
Dana J. Smith ..... Special Education Aide  
Sheryl Ward ..... Options Aide  
Jerry L. Folker ..... Custodian  
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Kathleen Storey ..... Unit Manager  
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Donna M. Bates ..... Part-time Cook  
Debra L. Nelson ..... Part-time Cook  
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David R. Sowby  
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Kim L. Stokes  
Viron Toponce  
Justin Urry  
Melinda Wade  
Brent G. Wayment  
Karen Yonemura  
Harold M. Zentz



## **NORTH OGDEN JUNIOR SCHOOL**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

North Ogden Junior High School, where:

**Cooperation** with school and community are taught,  
**Accountability** is expected from students, teachers, and parents,  
**Respect** for others and their property is incorporated,  
**Enthusiasm** for Life and learning is instilled and,  
**Success** in Academic, Emotional, Social and Physical  
areas is expected.

### **BELIEF STATEMENTS**

- Each child is important and unique; we respect the worth of the individual.
- The school should be a positive support to the family, the primary influence on the student.
- Integrity, trust, respect and courtesy are essential to positive interaction.
- Positive interaction encourages cooperation, builds self-esteem and promotes the appreciating of others.
- Diversity strengthens the individual, school and community.
- Instilling confidence and having expectations brings greater achievement.
- Learning is more productive when various teaching strategies are used.

### **THE VISION STATEMENT**

North Ogden Junior High seeks to:

- Recognize and respect differences in others.
- Achieve individual success in any and every area, realizing that success comes in varying degrees.
- Experience and enjoy successful collaboration.
- Accumulate required credits toward graduation.
- Connect and assimilate curriculum with life skills.

## **MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM**

Robinette Bowden, Ed.D., Syracuse Junior High School, Davis County School District, Chairperson

Pam Mitchell, Syracuse Junior High School, Davis County School District

Eric Neiselt, Bryant Intermediate School, Salt Lake City School District

Betty Fairbanks, Bryant Intermediate School, Salt Lake City School District

Georgia Loutensock, Utah State Office of Education

**VISITING TEAM REPORT**  
**NORTH OGDEN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

**CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE**

North Ogden Junior High School currently serves students from Bates, Majestic, and North Ogden Elementary Schools. This year the school was divided, and nearly half of the students were placed at a new junior high school. The faculty reports that the drop in enrollment has provided an increased opportunity for participation and involvement in clubs, activities, the PTSA, peer leadership, athletic teams, and school pride.

The staff consists of a principal, assistant principal, two counselors, 34 teachers, four secretaries, three aides, two full-time and eight part-time custodians, one law enforcement officer, and one media specialist.

*a) What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?*

The school's enrollment dropped from 1,046 students during the 2002-03 school year to 751 students this school year. However, the attendance rate and student demographics have remained proportionally constant. The school's ESL population, special education population, and ethnic composition (predominately Caucasian) have also remained constant. However, there is a slight decrease in the percentage of students who receive free or reduced-price lunch (from 10 percent to 7.5 percent). The school's testing profile indicates that its students score among the top four of Weber School District's nine junior high schools.

There has been a decrease in both the number and proportion of students who are suspended. The administration attributed this decrease to consistent enforcement of the school behavior plan.

*b) What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?*

The Visiting Team would like more information on the school's history. Conversations with the staff provided insight regarding the number of administrative staff changes in the last few years. Three different principals have been assigned to and transferred from the school in the last four years. Considering the recent changes in administration, the Visiting Team was particularly impressed with the staff's continued focus on school improvement and its support to the mission of the school.

Although data was presented in many areas, the data was not sufficiently disaggregated. The faculty needs to continue to analyze the data in relation to the various subgroups within the school. The critical question to be answered from the data is, “Who is learning and who is not learning?”

Some data was not clearly labeled. For example, it was not clear to the that the scores labeled as “Sixth Grade Math” were actually scores from the resource students.

### **Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:**

- In its quest to become a “data-driven” organization, the school should extend current practice to incorporate the collection and analysis of data in order to monitor and evaluate improvement efforts. This should include a means of measuring the effectiveness of the school’s goals and proposed focus group activities.
- In analyzing student achievement data, the staff should also explore possible correlations between student achievement and other measures of student success, such as attendance, course grades, participation in school activities, etc. Questions to drive further inquiry may include: Do we have students who attend regularly, but are not performing? Are high achieving students making adequate yearly progress in our classes? Are students who participate in school activities more likely to achieve? Are there patterns or trends in attendance and achievement that can be attributed to a certain grade level, gender, ethnicity, or subject area?
- The staff may want to pursue examining the correlation between class grades and CRT scores. Are students passing classes but failing to pass state tests? Are students passing state tests, but performing poorly in class? How do we reconcile these differences (if any)?

## **CHAPTER 2: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS**

- a) *To what extent has the school community engaged in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?*

The Visiting Team was impressed with the participation of the vast majority of the faculty in the self-study process. The Visiting Team recommends that the school extend the process to include more staff, parents, and community members.

- b) *To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?*

The school's profile, in conjunction with survey data, supports the school's analysis of its strengths and limitations. The Visiting Team was impressed with the unity of purpose presented by the faculty and administration. There was an effort to involve students and parents; however, this effort needs to be continued and expanded. Additional data and analysis are required to pinpoint achievement gaps, student concerns, and potential improvement targets.

### **CHAPTER 3: INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

North Ogden Junior High School's desired results for student learning (DRSLs) are as follows:

1. Literacy
  - Indicators:
    - Students will understand and demonstrate knowledge of literacy skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
    - Students will understand and properly use the Six Traits of Writing.
2. Numeracy
  - Indicator:
    - Students will continue to increase and use essential mathematical skills.
3. Communication/Collaboration
  - Indicator:
    - Students will work productively in groups, assuming various roles and responsibilities within a group of varying student backgrounds.
4. Responsible Character Development
  - Indicators:
    - Students will develop an understanding of Responsible Character skills.
    - Students will demonstrate appropriate behavior, citizenship, character, and ethics by positive actions towards school policies.

### **Shared Vision, Beliefs, Mission, and Goals:**

- a) *To what extent did the school facilitate a collaborative process to build a shared vision for the school (mission) that defines a compelling purpose and direction for the school?*

North Ogden Junior High has built its mission and belief statements over a period of years. Originally a site team was assigned the task of developing a mission statement. The current mission, beliefs, and vision are the result of numerous revisions and incarnations. A consensus-building process is established that involves teachers and administrators. Other stakeholders, such as students, parents, and community members, have had a limited role. It is recommended that focus groups and other decision-making bodies be expanded to include all stakeholders.

- b) *To what extent has the school defined a set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to support student achievement and success?*

The school's belief statements are comprehensive and address key issues relevant to effective decision making and policy development in the school. The mission statement describes the purpose and direction for the school, and reflects a focus on student learning as the top priority for the school.

The administration and staff seem to use that mission and beliefs to guide the many of the programs and facets of the school. There is a real and overt commitment that supports student achievement and success. The Visiting Team was impressed with the commitment of the administration and staff to students and their needs, academic or otherwise. Student learning and success appear to be central to much of the planning and decision making at North Ogden Junior High.

- c) *To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs)?*

There is a very strong alignment among the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs. The mission and DRSLs are incorporated visually on small posters displayed in every classroom and prominently depicted on a large mural in the main hall. Students were eager to share their knowledge of the DRSLs, and most could recite the mission and the DRSLs. Some students and staff members summarized the mission statement as "North Cares."

### **Curriculum Development:**

- a) *To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and the Utah Core Curriculum (with inclusion of the Utah Life Skills)?*

The Visiting Team observed that the administration and faculty have made and continue to make an effort to align themselves with the Utah State Core Curriculum. Each department meets at least two Tuesday mornings each month. In these meetings the teachers can share instructional strategies, scope, and sequence, as well as evaluating strengths and plotting for future areas of growth.

There is diversity among departments as to the structure of these meetings. In some departments, such as Applied Technology Education, the teachers have a variety of course offerings. This diversity makes creates difficulty, since there may be only one class in a given area. For the Applied Technology department, the meeting has become a time to share strategies for instruction and assessment. In other situations teachers use this time to align their curricula and refine course materials they may share with other departments.

With the increased emphasis on end-of-level tests, there is a need for all departments to address the competencies that students will be expected to attain. This school is just beginning to address the issues that have emerged with this new level of testing.

- b) *To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's desired results for student learning?*

During the past two years this school has worked hard to define and refine the schoolwide desired results for student learning (DRSLs). These have been condensed to four short and memorable statements. Through discussion it has been learned that there is wide acceptance and integration of these among all segments of the school population. The DRSLs are posted predominantly in classrooms and on a lovely mural in the main hall. The language of the DRSLs is woven regularly into classroom instruction. There is a willingness among the faculty at large to buy into the need for this direction, and the efficacy and benefit to student growth that will come with its application to their curricula.

As was mentioned previously, there are regular early morning meetings among departments. There are also intra-department and whole school meetings where there is collaboration on teaching strategies and instruction on practice. These “courses,” as well as the collaborative efforts to increase the school’s quality of education, help the teachers meet their personal professional goals.

The Visiting Team suggests that faculty members continue their efforts to collaborate, and expand this collaboration to include curriculum mapping, as well as cross-curricular activities and emphasis.

**Quality Instructional Design:**

- a) *To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students?*

The Visiting Team observed a variety of learning experiences in some classrooms. Instructional strategies in the areas of foreign language and language arts specifically included not only direct instruction, but collaborative learning activities, whiteboard activities, individual inquiry, role playing, project-based learning, and teaching games. It was apparent that students were actively engaged in their learning. The fact that both students and teachers appeared to enjoy the lessons is commendable.

The Visiting Team recommends that *all* departments implement additional strategies to complement direct instruction. In fact, one of the weakest areas indicated in the student surveys was the response to the statement, “My teachers have a variety of activities to help me learn.” Again, some departments do a great job. Others might need to explore more.

- b) *To what extent does the professional staff employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure the needs of different learners are met?*

The Visiting Team is aware that both students and teachers have begun to explore the issue of learning styles. The team observed varied teaching strategies, both written and oral, within many classrooms. The Visiting Team commends North Ogden Junior High for having some teachers trained in best practices, and also for rotating the members of that group to allow more of the staff to experience first-hand best practices. The Visiting Team feels that this rotation should indeed take place, for the effects of this training are apparent in many but not all of the classrooms.

The Visiting Team was also impressed with the school’s support and encouragement for teachers to attend workshops and conferences, and upon return to present and share new ideas gleaned from these meetings during departmental meetings.

- c) *To what extent do the professional staff and leadership provide additional opportunities which support student learning?*



The Visiting Team recognizes that other learning opportunities are afforded outside the classroom. For instance, the Foreign Language Department participates in the Weber District French, German, and Spanish competitions. Students enjoy other language-specific activities, such as clubs for each language. The Math Department participates in Math Counts; the Science Department participates in the Science Olympiad. Other student clubs—such as the Chess Club, MESA Club, cheerleaders, and the yearbook and photography clubs—address a variety of student interests and needs. The Honor Society, which is very service-oriented, is another group that supports the character development facet of the DRSLs, as does the Peer Group whose function is to help new students or students who have special needs.

The school has purchased an online math program, “hotmath.com.” The language arts program is moving forward with the Accelerated Reading (AR) program. There is a “homework haven” available for those who need special help, as well as a program in place to address those students who require remediation. The Visiting Team especially commends the faculty for being available both before and after school to assist any student. The Visiting Team recognizes the dedication and caring of the faculty, staff, and administration.

#### **Quality Assessment Systems:**

- a) *To what extent has the staff developed classroom or schoolwide assessments based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?*

The parent survey—and, even more so, the student survey provided to the — indicate overwhelmingly that parents and students are aware of what the teachers expect of the students. The Visiting Team noted classroom rubrics for specific assignments to ensure that the students knew what was expected of them. Schoolwide assessments also include the rubrics developed for the DRSLs, such as the Literacy Rubric and the Numeracy Rubric. Posting and teaching the Six Traits of Writing in each classroom also addresses writing across the curriculum. As each teacher reinforces the common DRSLs, students have the opportunity to internalize the fact that individual classes or subjects are not entities unto themselves. The Visiting Team recommends that teachers continue to focus on the DRSLs in a way that shows class tie-ins.

The staff recognizes the need for placement of students who are reading two or more years below level. This year the school has begun to administer the Gates-McGinitie test to identify these students and provide classes for them. This move is commendable.

- b) *To what extent are assessments of student learning developed using methods that reflect the intended purpose and performance standards?*

The Visiting Team has observed a number of methods of student assessment within some classrooms and departments including, various oral activities, with partners and in front of the class; portfolios; projects; written work, both creative and research-based; multiple-choice tests conducted via the computer lab with Accelerated Reader; and the use of programs to prepare for the CRTs.

Because of the short period of time covered by the visit, the Visiting Team was unable to fully observe schoolwide the extent of individual teacher testing. However, some department areas were noticeably lacking in variety. This was not only observed during the team's visits to the classrooms, but also in conversation with students, who said that there were generally not many alternate types of assessment and that most of the testing consisted of traditional written exams.

The North Ogden Junior High School Improvement Plan indicates that one area for growth is the incorporation of schoolwide DRSLs into assessment tools, and that teachers need to engage in more collaboration with other departments. One recommendation is to periodically have departmental meetings in the library or other central location to afford an opportunity for crossover and cooperation with other departments to promote interdisciplinary projects.

- c) *To what extent are assessments designed, developed, and used in a fair and equitable manner?*

The demographics of the school indicate that North Ogden Junior High is basically homogeneous in makeup. Fairness does not appear to be an issue at all at this school. Moreover, according to the data provided, students feel strongly that assessments reflect material covered in class. This is fair.

### **Leadership for School Improvement:**

- a) *To what extent does the leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate and actively supporting teaching and learning?*

The leadership at North Ogden Junior High feels a great commitment to educating each student. They accomplish this through careful analysis of student data and construction of classes to meet student needs. The leadership supports quality instruction through minimizing disruptions and time out of class. They also support professional development. The faculty commented often on their administration as true instructional leaders.

The administrators have provided opportunities for faculty to attend a variety of professional development workshops that address the needs and goals of the school. Teachers who attend these workshops return to school and present the ideas to the faculty.

There is a school wide expectation on the part of the school leadership of good behavior by the students. The students, parents, teachers and staff can be assured that leadership will support them in the learning process.

- b) *To what extent does leadership employ effective decision making that is data-driven, research-based and collaborative?*

The administration at North Ogden Junior High regularly employs a variety of assessments to make class offering and students assignments decisions. This is not done with just the two administrators, but with a team including counselors and department representatives. The team would suggest that the school leadership continue and expand the use of the school's team to assess data and to make recommendations for school programs.

- c) *To what extent does leadership monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness through a comprehensive assessment system and continuous reflection?*

As mentioned in the previous section, a member of the Visiting Team was able to sit-in on the weekly meeting of the principal, counselors and teachers to monitor student achievement. The VT was impressed with the organization of this meeting to improve student learning. The faculty commented several times about the care taken by the counselors and administration to assure each student's needs are met.

- d) *To what extent does the leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations and resources of the school for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment?*

The leadership of the school provides skillful stewardship. The Visiting Team found all stakeholders are comfortable with decisions made by the school leadership. This leadership team exemplifies a true feeling of caring. The leadership style can be best described as invitational.

Decisions about monetary expenditures are made with the schools goals, needs and DRSLs in the forefront. The school leadership is also respectful of the time resource. There are minimal interruptions into the school day for "extra" activities and announcements.

When students are sent to the office for behavior referrals, the school leadership involves the parents at an early stage. This contact and face-to-face meeting is an opportunity for parents, students and school advisors to create a climate for change and improved behavior.

- e) *To what extent does the leadership make decisions related to the allocation and use of resources which align with the school goals, the achievement of the DRSLs, and school improvement efforts?*

The VT observed the importance of the DRSLs in the decision making process for this school leadership. Many of the programs that involve time and money are the direct response to the needs of school improvement, school goals and meeting the DRSLs. Several programs have been funded so that the DRSLs of Numeracy can be met. One example is the math web site to assist students with their homework.

- f) *To what extent does the school leadership empower the school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration and shared responsibility for student learning?*

This is an area in which the VT team recommends attention. The team could find little evidence of a strong Community Council that was participating in the shared responsibility for student learning? There is also work to do to strengthen the PTSA and business partnership role in student learning.

### **Community Building:**

- a) *To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?*

It has been the experience of the Visiting Team that North Ogden Junior High, has labored intensively to create an atmosphere of community within the school's walls. In visiting with stakeholders (staff, students, and community members), it has been evident that all feel that North Ogden Junior High is **their** school. Positive recognition of individual accomplishments is visible and celebrated by all. Students express feelings of acceptance by both their peers and the school's staff. The Visiting Team found that students felt free and encouraged to join in the activities, clubs, and school organizations. Furthermore, students view all members of the staff as eager to assist all students in their pursuit of high academic and personal achievement. One student remarked, "Teachers really let us know they care—they are like an extra parent." Additionally, students expressed admiration for the level of respect that all staff members show to one another as well as to the students. "The attitudes of the teachers toward educating my son are very positive," said one parent. "To these teachers, being at North is more than a job, it is a passion."

The North Ogden Junior High staff is afforded ownership at a high level. The Visiting Team was repeatedly shown evidence that staff members' voices from all levels (certified and classified) are being heard and respected schoolwide. There is a pervasive understanding of the goals and expectations of both staff and students. Many of the staff with which the Visiting Team visited remarked on the

importance of common goals as a springboard to unity. Staff ownership has even spread to faculty meetings. The shared responsibility of the staff to create innovative and informative professional development inservice presentations has created a collegial respect for all members of the teaching staff. Furthermore, in speaking with classified staff, evidence of professional appreciation and respect is granted to all staff members by all staff members. Staff members expressed that they feel fully supported by the administration of the school. “Both administrators are visible throughout the school all day, and they have made communication with the entire staff a priority,” stated one teaching staff member during a visit. This concentration on communication has increased the levels of trust and respect between administrators and staff members.

However, during discussions with stakeholders, students repeatedly commented on the use of vulgar language and displays of disrespect shown by their peers toward one another and their teachers. These actions were of concern to these students, but they did feel that the situation has improved somewhat recently due to a decrease in student population.

*b) To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?*

Community involvement is a high priority at North Ogden Junior High. Students and staff regularly interact with community entities on the Internet (Edline and the school website), via fieldtrips (UDWR, the Hoff Winter Festival, Language Fairs), and through community service projects performed by students (including the Honor Society, the Chorale, and student body officers). The stakeholders have also been active in researching and implementing programs such as a daytime curfew to curb student truancy and community use of gymnasium space. The PTSA contributes toward the school community through fundraising efforts and career exploration activities.

The Visiting Team found a great deal of evidence that shows North Ogden Junior High is aware that parental involvement is critical to student success. It is clear that efforts are being made to keep parents informed and included in the decision-making processes. North Ogden Junior High tries to communicate with stakeholders through:

- Regular mailings of newsletters and information.
- Mid-term grade report mailing just prior to scheduled parent-teacher conferences.
- An easily accessible school website.
- Edline, which allows stakeholders access to student grades, class announcements, school calendars, and other pertinent information.

In addition, parents are consistently invited and encouraged to attend parent-teacher conferences, PTSA meetings, and back-to-school nights held throughout the year.

The Visiting Team recommends that North Ogden Junior High continue to work toward involving parents and community members in all functions of the school (including student learning), and work toward including additional parents and community members within the functioning focus groups in an ongoing dialogue with regard to school improvement.

The Visiting Team is especially hopeful that the North Ogden Junior High School Community Council will become a more effective and meaningful entity. While the team recognizes certain difficulties in achieving parental attendance at school functions, it also affirms that without this voice being formally sought, these stakeholders are not included in school change of any kind.

### **Culture of Continuous Improvement and Learning:**

- a) *To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs focused on the school's goals for improvement?*

The Visiting Team was impressed by North Ogden Junior High's continued efforts to implement staff-wide professional development. In conjunction with faculty meetings, the departments present inservice to the entire staff on various subjects that are directly related to some of the schoolwide DRSLs. For instance, staff members reported that after being instructed on the Six Traits of Writing by the Language Arts Department, the staff was able to better achieve the DRSLs as they worked with students within their own disciplines to become better writers. This ongoing initiative indicates to the Visiting Team that staff members welcome collaborative efforts toward positive change.

In the course of discussion, teachers indicated that their individual pursuits of professional development are also well supported by administrative personnel. It is the hope of the Visiting Team that this process will continue and expand. Suggestions for areas of focus include schoolwide curriculum mapping, cross-curricular scope and sequence, and exploration and implementation of a variety of assessments of student learning.

It is also recommended that staff members be apprised of and trained to use resources available to them that may assist in their individual growth. These resources may include Utah Education Network (UEN) tools, the Pioneer online library, and Marco Polo electronic media.

- b) *To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?*

North Ogden Junior High is a school with a spirit of positive energy as experienced by the Visiting Team. This spirit is extended to students and staff schoolwide. Due in part to the leadership of the current administration, the Visiting Team witnessed a school that is engaged in lifelong learning. The entire teaching staff participates in focus groups and staff-taught professional development tied into faculty meetings.

The students of North Ogden Junior High are also a driving force for positive change. As the Visiting Team met with various groups of students, they received affirmation of the students' desire to become the best that they can be. Students have faith in the North Ogden Junior High staff to help them reach that goal. Staff members indicated to the Visiting Team that the accreditation process has been an impetus for positive change that will continue and will be ongoing in the future.

However, the Visiting Team recommends that all stakeholders be more involved in all change processes that occur at North Ogden Junior High. Concerns are especially centered on parental involvement beyond the PTSA. The Visiting Team encourages the North Ogden Junior High School Community Council to become a more effective and meaningful entity. Recognizing certain difficulties involved, the Visiting Team affirms that without this voice being formally sought, these stakeholders are not included in school change of any kind.

#### **CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) STANDARDS I-XI**

This chapter is not applicable to North Ogden Junior High School. Most Utah public junior high and middle schools are not accredited through the NAAS, only through the USOE—it is their choice to join NAAS or not.

#### **CHAPTER 5: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS – ACTION PLAN**

- a) *To what extent is the schoolwide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up?*

The action plan seems realistic and reflects the mission and beliefs of North Ogden Junior High.

- b) *To what extent is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, schoolwide and systemwide?*

The majority of North Ogden Junior High School faculty members participated in the development of the school's action plan. It is assumed that, having had the opportunity to give input, the staff will work collaboratively to ensure the input is actualized. There has already been some implementation of the action plan in relation to the "BEST" team, made up of staff members that demonstrate "best practices" in their classrooms. There appears to be a strong faculty support for this behavioral plan.

- c) *How sound does the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishments of the schoolwide action plan appear to be?*

The previous principal wrote the first draft of the action plan. However, when Mr. Tanner, the current principal, arrived at the school, the process was broadened to include a committee of teachers. The Visiting Team recommends that the faculty and administration review the plan with input from students, parents, and the community. Although the plan outlines a timeline, the Visiting Team recommends that specific persons or groups be identified as being responsible for implementation of the plan. Effective rubrics are in place to monitor accomplishment of the action plan goals.

## **CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM**

### **Commendations:**

- The Visiting Team commends the faculty for its stability of purpose in spite of frequent changes in the school administration. The faculty has clearly articulated the desired results for student learning and the mission of the school. The Visiting Team was impressed with the strong core of teachers that know and understand these principles.
- The staff is to be commended for taking a leadership role in professional development. The "BEST" team is making a positive difference in the school.
- The Visiting Team commends the way the teachers and staff at North Ogden Junior High exemplify their motto. They CARE. They are available and willing to assist students, and the students know this. The school climate is friendly and invitational.



- The Visiting Team commends the level of achievement by students at North Ogden Junior High, who generally score highly on state assessments.

**Recommendations:**

- The Visiting Team recommends that although the school has tried to include members of the community in the decision-making process, more and persistent effort still needs to be made to include the PTSA and the Community Council in the school improvement plan.
- The Visiting Team recommends that membership of the Action Plan Committee be broadened to include parents, students, and community members, as well as the faculty and administration.
- The Visiting Team recommends data be disaggregated and analyzed to answer the question of who is learning and who is not learning. While cumulative data indicates that North Ogden Junior High School students are performing above district averages, the achievement of specific subgroups is not addressed. The school should continue developing a comprehensive assessment system for gathering, analyzing, and using pertinent data. These efforts should extend to gathering and using data to monitor and evaluate improvement efforts as they are implemented and refined.